

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of the claims and all prior listings of the claims in the present application.

1-50. (Cancelled).

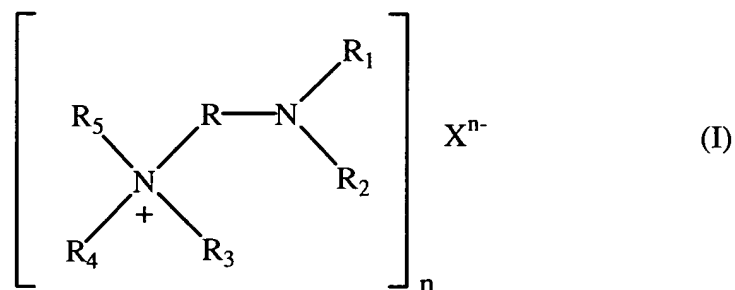
51. (Currently Amended) A tyre for a vehicle wheel, comprising at least one structural element comprising an elastomeric composition, the elastomeric composition comprising:

at least one diene elastomeric polymer;

at least one reinforcing filler comprising silica;

at least one silica coupling agent; and

at least one organic quaternary ammonium salt having a following general formula (I):

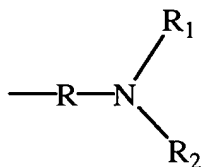


wherein R represents a linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkylene group; a linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkenylene group; a C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> arylene group; and/or a C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub> alkylarylene

or alkylenearylene group; the group or groups optionally containing at least one heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur,

wherein  $R_1$  and  $R_2$ , which may be identical or different, represent a linear or branched  $C_1$ - $C_{22}$  alkyl group; a linear or branched  $C_2$ - $C_{22}$  alkenyl group; a  $C_6$ - $C_{18}$  aryl group; and/or a  $C_7$ - $C_{20}$  arylalkyl or alkylaryl group; the group or groups optionally containing at least one heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur; or,  $R_1$  and  $R_2$ , considered jointly with the nitrogen atom to which they are linked, represent a  $C_5$ - $C_{18}$  heterocyclic ring optionally containing a second heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur; or,  $R_1$  and  $R_5$  and/or  $R_2$  and  $R_3$ , considered jointly with the nitrogen atoms to which they are linked, represent a  $C_5$ - $C_{18}$  heterocyclic ring,

wherein  $R_3$ ,  $R_4$ , and  $R_5$ , which may be identical or different, represent a linear or branched  $C_1$ - $C_{22}$  alkyl group; a linear or branched  $C_2$ - $C_{22}$  alkenyl group; a  $C_6$ - $C_{18}$  aryl group; a  $C_7$ - $C_{20}$  arylalkyl or alkylaryl group; and/or a group having a following formula:



wherein  $R$ ,  $R_1$ , and  $R_2$ , have the same meanings as disclosed above; or two from  $R_3$ ,  $R_4$ , and  $R_5$ , considered jointly with the nitrogen atom to which they are linked, represent a  $C_5$ - $C_{18}$  heterocyclic ring optionally containing a second heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur,

wherein  $X^{n-}$  represents an inorganic or organic anion group, and

wherein n represents 1, 2, or 3.

52. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 51, comprising:

a carcass structure;

a belt structure;

a tread band; and

a pair of sidewalls;

wherein the carcass structure comprises at least one carcass ply,

wherein the at least one carcass ply is shaped in a substantially toroidal configuration,

wherein opposite lateral edges of the carcass structure are associated with respective bead wires,

wherein each bead wire is enclosed in a respective bead,

wherein the belt structure comprises at least one belt strip applied in a circumferentially external position relative to the carcass structure;

wherein the tread band is superimposed circumferentially on the belt structure,

wherein the sidewalls are applied laterally on opposite sides relative to the carcass structure, and

wherein the at least one structural element comprising the elastomeric composition is the tread band.

53. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 51, wherein the elastomeric composition is substantially free of additional secondary accelerators.

54. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 51, wherein the elastomeric composition is substantially free of diphenyl guanidine (DPG).

55. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 51, wherein  $X^{n-}$  is selected from: halide ions such as iodine, bromine, fluorine, or chlorine ions; ipiodite ion; ipobromite ion; fluorite ion; chlorite ion; iodite ion; bromite ion; fluorine ion; chlorite ion; iodate ion; bromate ion; fluorate ion; chlorate ion; periodate ion; perbromate ion; perfluorate ion; perchlorate ion; nitrate ion; nitrite ion; sulfate ion; sulfite ion; phosphate ion; phosphite ion; hydroxide ion; or an anion group represented by a following formulae (II) to (V):



wherein  $R_6$  represents a linear or branched  $C_1$ - $C_{18}$  alkyl group; a linear or branched  $C_2$ - $C_{18}$  alkenyl group; a  $C_6$ - $C_{18}$  aryl group; or a  $C_7$ - $C_{20}$  arylalkyl or alkylaryl group; the group or groups optionally containing at least one of the following: a hydroxyl group, a carbonyl group, an ether group, a thioether group, and/or an ester group;

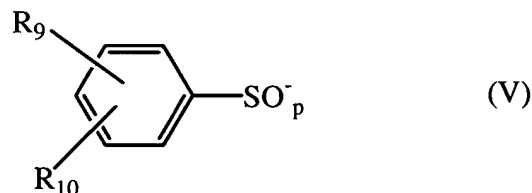


wherein  $m$  represents 0 or 1;  $R_7$  represents a linear or branched  $C_1$ - $C_{18}$  alkylene group; a linear, branched or cyclic  $C_2$ - $C_{18}$  alkenylene group; a  $C_6$ - $C_{18}$  arylene group; or a  $C_7$ - $C_{20}$  arylalkylene or alkylarylene group; the group or groups optionally containing at

least one of the following: a hydroxyl group, a carbonyl group, an ether group, a thioether group, and/or an ester group;



wherein p represent 3 or 4;  $\text{R}_8$  represents a linear or branched  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{18}$  alkyl group; a linear or branched  $\text{C}_2\text{-C}_{18}$  alkenyl group; a  $\text{C}_6\text{-C}_{18}$  aryl group; or a  $\text{C}_7\text{-C}_{20}$  arylalkyl or alkylaryl group; the group or groups optionally containing at least one of the following: a hydroxyl group, a carbonyl group, an ether group, a thioether group, and/or an ester group;



wherein p represents 3 or 4;  $\text{R}_9$  and  $\text{R}_{10}$ , which may be identical or different, represent a hydrogen atom; a linear or branched  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{18}$  alkyl group; a linear or branched  $\text{C}_2\text{-C}_{18}$  alkenyl group; a  $\text{C}_6\text{-C}_{18}$  aryl group; and/or a  $\text{C}_7\text{-C}_{20}$  arylalkyl or alkylaryl group; the group or groups optionally containing at least one of the following: a hydroxyl group, a carbonyl group, an ether group, a thioether group, and/or an ester group.

56. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 55, wherein R and  $\text{R}_7$  represent one or more of: methylene, ethylene, propylene, butylene, 2,2-dimethyl-1,3-propylene, hexylene, 2-methyl-3-ethyl-1,4-butylene, octylene, vinylene, butenylene,

isobutenylene, pentenylene, hexenylene, phenylene, naphthylene, diphenylene, benzenylene, phenylmethylene, phenylethylene, naphthylmethylene, naphthylethylene, methylphenylene, ethylphenylene, methylnaphthylene, and ethylnaphthylene.

57. (Previously Presented) The type of claim 55, wherein  $R_1$ ,  $R_2$ ,  $R_3$ ,  $R_4$ ,  $R_5$ ,  $R_6$ ,  $R_8$ ,  $R_9$ , and  $R_{10}$  represent one or more of: methyl, ethyl, propyl, isopropyl, butyl, isobutyl, pentyl, hexyl, octyl, allyl, methallyl, 2-butenyl, propenyl, hexenyl, octenyl, benzyl, phenyl, naphthyl, methylbenzyl, ethylbenzyl, diphenyl, methylphenyl, ethylphenyl, methylnaphthyl, and ethylnaphthyl.

58. (Previously Presented) The type of claim 51, wherein  $R_1$  and  $R_2$ , considered jointly with the nitrogen atom or atoms to which they are linked, represent one or more of: morpholine, pyrrolidine, piperidine, N-methyl-piperidine, piperazine, thiomorpholine, thiazolidine, benzothiazolidine, and imidazole.

59. (Previously Presented) The type of claim 51, wherein  $R_1$  and  $R_5$  and/or  $R_2$  and  $R_3$ , considered jointly with the nitrogen atoms to which they are linked, represent one or more of: piperazine and 1,8-diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane.

60. (Previously Presented) The type of claim 51, wherein in a case wherein two from  $R_3$ ,  $R_4$ , and  $R_5$ , considered jointly with the nitrogen atom or atoms to which they are linked, represent a  $C_5$ - $C_{18}$  heterocyclic ring, the heterocyclic ring or rings represent one or more of: pyrrolidinium, piperidinium, piperazinium, and imidazolium.

61. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 51, wherein the at least one organic quaternary ammonium salt is present in the elastomeric composition in an amount from 0.1 phr to 10 phr.

62. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 51, wherein the at least one organic quaternary ammonium salt is present in the elastomeric composition in an amount from 0.5 phr to 5 phr.

63. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 51, wherein the at least one diene elastomeric polymer has a glass transition temperature ( $T_g$ ) below 20° C.

64. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 63, wherein the at least one diene elastomeric polymer comprises one or more of: cis-1,4-polyisoprene; 3,4-polyisoprene; polybutadiene; optionally halogenated isoprene/isobutene copolymers; 1,3-butadiene/acrylonitrile copolymers; styrene/1,3-butadiene copolymers; styrene/isoprene/1,3-butadiene copolymers; and styrene/1,3-butadiene/acrylonitrile copolymers.

65. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 51, wherein the elastomeric composition further comprises at least one elastomeric polymer of one or more monoolefins with an olefinic comonomer or derivatives thereof.

66. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 65, wherein the at least one elastomeric polymer comprises one or more of: ethylene/propylene copolymers (EPR) or ethylene/propylene/diene copolymers (EPDM); polyisobutene; butyl rubbers; and halobutyl rubbers.

67. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 51, wherein the elastomeric composition further comprises at least one primary accelerator.

68. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 67, wherein the at least one primary accelerator is selected from thiazoles, sulphenamides, and/or xanthogenates.

69. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 67, wherein the at least one primary accelerator is selected from sulphenamides.

70. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 67, wherein the at least one primary accelerator is present in the elastomeric composition in an amount from 0.1 phr to 10 phr.

71. (Previously Presented) The tyre of claim 67, wherein the at least one primary accelerator is present in the elastomeric composition in an amount from 0.5 phr to 5 phr.

72. (Currently Amended) The tyre of claim 51, wherein the ~~elastomeric composition further comprises~~ at least one reinforcing filler comprising silica is present in an amount between 0.1 phr and 120 phr.

73. (Currently Amended) The tyre of claim ~~[[72]]~~ 51, wherein the elastomeric composition further comprises at least one carbon black reinforcing filler-  
~~comprises carbon black.~~

74. (Cancelled).

75. (Cancelled).



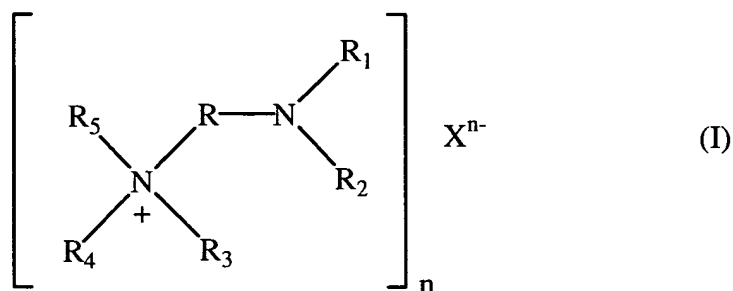
76. (Currently Amended) A tread band for a tyre, the tread band comprising a crosslinkable elastomeric composition, the elastomeric composition comprising:

at least one diene elastomeric polymer;

at least one reinforcing filler comprising silica;

at least one silica coupling agent; and

at least one organic quaternary ammonium salt having a following general formula (I):

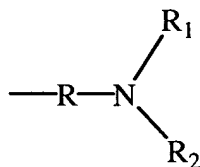


wherein R represents a linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkylene group; a linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkenylene group; a C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> arylene group; and/or a C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub> alkylarylene or alkylenearylene group; the group or groups optionally containing at least one heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur,

wherein R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub>, which may be identical or different, represent a linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkyl group; a linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkenyl group; a C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> aryl group; and/or a C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub> arylalkyl or alkylaryl group; the group or groups optionally containing at least one heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur; or, R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub>, considered jointly with the nitrogen atom to which they are linked, represent a

C<sub>5</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> heterocyclic ring optionally containing a second heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur; or, R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>5</sub> and/or R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub>, considered jointly with the nitrogen atoms to which they are linked, represent a C<sub>5</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> heterocyclic ring,

wherein R<sub>3</sub>, R<sub>4</sub>, and R<sub>5</sub>, which may be identical or different, represent a linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkyl group; a linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkenyl group; a C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> aryl group; a C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub> arylalkyl or alkylaryl group; and/or a group having a following formula:



wherein R, R<sub>1</sub>, and R<sub>2</sub>, have the same meanings as disclosed above; or two from R<sub>3</sub>, R<sub>4</sub>, and R<sub>5</sub>, considered jointly with the nitrogen atom to which they are linked, represent a C<sub>5</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> heterocyclic ring optionally containing a second heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur,

wherein X<sup>n-</sup> represents an inorganic or organic anion group, and

wherein n represents 1, 2, or 3.

77. (Previously Presented) The tread band of claim 76, wherein the elastomeric composition is substantially free of additional secondary accelerators.

78. (Previously Presented) The tread band of claim 76, wherein the elastomeric composition is substantially free of diphenyl guanidine (DPG).

79. (Previously Presented) The tread band of claim 76, wherein the at least one organic quaternary ammonium salt is present in the elastomeric composition in an amount from 0.1 phr to 10 phr.

80. (Previously Presented) The tread band of claim 76, wherein the at least one diene elastomeric polymer has a glass transition temperature ( $T_g$ ) below 20° C.

81. (Previously Presented) The tread band of claim 76, wherein the elastomeric composition further comprises at least one elastomeric polymer of one or more monoolefins with an olefinic comonomer or derivatives thereof.

82. (Previously Presented) The tread band of claim 76, wherein the elastomeric composition further comprises at least one primary accelerator.

83. (Previously Presented) The tread band of claim 82, wherein the at least one primary accelerator is selected from thiazoles, sulphenamides, and/or xanthogenates.

84. (Currently Amended) The tread band of claim 76, wherein the ~~elastomeric composition further comprises~~ at least one reinforcing filler comprising silica is present in an amount between 0.1 phr and 120 phr.

85. (Currently Amended) The tread band of claim ~~[[84]]~~ 76, wherein the elastomeric composition further comprises at least one carbon black reinforcing filler ~~comprises carbon black~~.

86. (Cancelled).

87. (Cancelled).

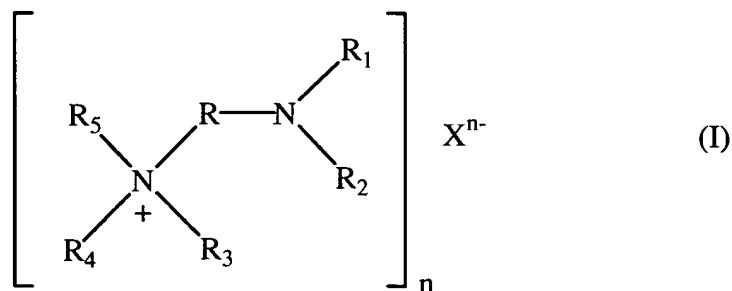
88. (Currently Amended) A crosslinkable elastomeric composition,  
comprising:

at least one diene elastomeric polymer;

at least one reinforcing filler comprising silica;

at least one silica coupling agent; and

at least one organic quaternary ammonium salt having a following general  
formula (I):

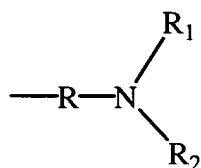


wherein R represents a linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkylene group; a linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkenylene group; a C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> arylene group; and/or a C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub> alkylarylene or alkenylenearylene group; the group or groups optionally containing at least one heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur,

wherein R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub>, which may be identical or different, represent a linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkyl group; a linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkenyl group; a C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> aryl group; and/or a C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub> arylalkyl or alkylaryl group; the group or groups optionally

containing at least one heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur; or, R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub>, considered jointly with the nitrogen atom to which they are linked, represent a C<sub>5</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> heterocyclic ring optionally containing a second heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur; or, R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>5</sub> and/or R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub>, considered jointly with the nitrogen atoms to which they are linked, represent a C<sub>5</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> heterocyclic ring,

wherein R<sub>3</sub>, R<sub>4</sub>, and R<sub>5</sub>, which may be identical or different, represent a linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkyl group; a linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>22</sub> alkenyl group; a C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> aryl group; a C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub> arylalkyl or alkylaryl group; and/or a group having a following formula:



wherein R, R<sub>1</sub>, and R<sub>2</sub>, have the same meanings as disclosed above; or two from R<sub>3</sub>, R<sub>4</sub>, and R<sub>5</sub>, considered jointly with the nitrogen atom to which they are linked, represent a C<sub>5</sub>-C<sub>18</sub> heterocyclic ring optionally containing a second heteroatom selected from oxygen, nitrogen, and/or sulfur,

wherein X<sup>n-</sup> represents an inorganic or organic anion group, and

wherein n represents 1, 2, or 3.

89. (Previously Presented) The elastomeric composition of claim 88, wherein the elastomeric composition is substantially free of additional secondary accelerators.

90. (Previously Presented) The elastomeric composition of claim 88, wherein the elastomeric composition is substantially free of diphenyl guanidine (DPG).

91. (Previously Presented) The elastomeric composition of claim 88, wherein the at least one organic quaternary ammonium salt is present in the elastomeric composition in an amount from 0.1 phr to 10 phr.

92. (Previously Presented) The elastomeric composition of claim 88, wherein the at least one diene elastomeric polymer has a glass transition temperature ( $T_g$ ) below 20° C.

93. (Previously Presented) The elastomeric composition of claim 88, further comprising at least one elastomeric polymer of one or more monoolefins with an olefinic comonomer or derivatives thereof.

94. (Previously Presented) The elastomeric composition of claim 88, further comprising at least one primary accelerator.

95. (Previously Presented) The elastomeric composition of claim 94, wherein the at least one primary accelerator is selected from thiazoles, sulphenamides, and/or xanthogenates.

96. (Currently Amended) The elastomeric composition of claim 88, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the at least one reinforcing filler silica is present in an amount between 0.1 phr and 120 phr.

97. (Currently Amended) The elastomeric composition of claim ~~[[96]]~~ 88, wherein the elastomeric composition further comprises at least one carbon black reinforcing filler ~~comprises carbon black~~.

98. (Cancelled).

99. (Cancelled).

100. (Previously Presented) A crosslinked elastomeric manufactured product obtained by crosslinking the elastomeric composition of claim 88.

101. (New) The tyre of claim 73, wherein the carbon black is present in an amount between 0.1 phr and 120 phr.

102. (New) The tread band of claim 85, wherein the carbon black is present in an amount between 0.1 phr and 120 phr.

103. (New) The elastomeric composition of claim 97, wherein the carbon black is present in an amount between 0.1 phr and 120 phr.